1912

TELEPHONE 6247 CITY.

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Sep 14

My Billy.

What happened to you today? We went to the Austro Hungarian at 1-30. meaning to tele you that you must come & lunch elsewhere. A very bad crossing & German food had reduced us to such a condition that we felt it to be quite impossible to face more German food. & we thought we'd take you to some French place near. We waited till about ¼ to 2 & then telephoned to Brunswick & were told you had started out at 20 to 2. So we hoped you would appear in a few minutes. But by 2 there was no sign of you. Clive had rather a lot to do before

going to Scotland this evening. I Roger who was with us was going also in a hurry. I so we decided not to wait any longer. I went off & lunched near the Palace. Also as you had apparently started to meet us at 20 to 2 & hadn't arrived by 2 we thought somethings must have turned you in another direction. Even your walking couldn't be as slow as that.

I telephoned this afternoon when I got in at about 4. but found you had just gone. I was very much disappointed not to see you. We had the most hellish time in Cologne. at least all but the pictures was hellish. Why does any sane person go to Germany? I shall never get that

again. It was of course pouring with rain & icy cold. But that was not peculiar to Cologne. The pictures were good. But on the whole the show was disappointing. Except for some Cezannes which Roger will probably secure for the Grafton there was nothing but what we could see elsewhere. Our hotel was comfortable & the food very good. The trains luxurious & all one's needs catered for. But the horrors are unspeakable. The country is completely coloured in mustard & pepper. The women are without exception ugly & ill-dressed. But the worst of all is the art. which is everywhere. No house. no train. nothing is left alone. All are covered with refined German art. It got so irritating that we longed for England. At least we did for once appreciate our native land & rejoice to return from the continent. Unluckily the sea

was so suddenly & violently rough that we, having only taken Stugeron pills a few minutes before in the expectation of a few choppy movements at worst, were obliged to eat it. at least I was. Clive just managed to resist. Roger was completely undone. It got calmer after about 2 hours. but it was an awful experience. & left us in a state of collapse today. Also the German food: though good, as I must in justice admit, is somehow stuffy & weighty. God, what a people. I can't get over them. How can Adrian stand 6 weeks of it. I suppose, though, that you know all about it. I am converted to thinking that a German invasion would be unspeakable horror. Everything about them is wrong & pretentious to a degree. I have seldom felt so strongly about any people. But perhaps it bores you. Still I am glad to have had the experience for now I know that I need never enter that country again. Your letter had just ended it & thank. I am alone here & should like detailed news. Love to Leonard. Is he happy too? Write. Yours V.

T. PARSONS 3-2-73

1912

From the Reading Room

THE CIVIL SERVICE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY L.D.

28, Haymarket, S.W. Aug 15.

My Billy. I have 3/4 of an hour to spend in the waiting room & have a pen so shall have the benefit of it. You may have been surprised by the wild telephone message you must have received from that shoal at B. Sq. but the fact was that we read in the papers some days ago that there was an outbreak of typhoid at Avignon. I meant to tell you when I wrote but quite forgot. Roger. who was spending Sunday with us at Aberdeen said we must somehow let you know. & so he bicycled in to Lewes & telephoned with great difficulty to Florry who seemed to be paralysed with terror. I have come up this morning to do some odd jobs & meet the children at Paddington this afternoon. I went to B. Sq. this morning but found you had left last night. I got your address though It was stupid about the Austro-Hungarian but the telephone seemed to have

I must give Leonard some business messages. First I invite master his instructions about Kings B. W. & carry them out. Am I to take rooms on my own responsibility if there are any to be had or would that be going too far? Then. Roger would be delighted to have him as secretary to the Grafton. He had not thought of him as he thought there was no chance of his doing such a job. He is very glad to get him & thinks he will be better even than Desmond. He is going to write about it. He need not be there till Oct 8th about. but you will get full details from Roger.

Your honeymoon in the Quantocks sounds very wintry. but apparently internal warmth made up for the outside cold. I wish you'd send me details to enliven my solitude.

It is very damp & grey at Asheham but as you may imagine I am very busy inside the house. putting up curtains etc. I have just been getting a bright reddish orange stuff for curtains for the sitting room. to be lined & bordered with mauve. & a set of Badminton to be played in front of the house: which will be good practice for tennis & wife I hope keep the males happy. In fact it is all going to be as charming as I can get it to be to make Clive want to keep it in. Sibyl is very amiable. bent on showing her superiority to Jessie I think. Wonderful new eggdishes appear at every meal. She & Maud seem very happy & think it a beautiful place. & she was very much touched by Leonard's post card. I also was very much pleased by his letter. extraordinarily false though his idea of my character seems to be. Of course

I should have expected him to be
in the 7th heaven of delight & happiness
& should never trouble & quibble
in the way he suppose to bring
to the ape gets all he wants, doesn't
smell too much & has his claws
well cut. He's a pleasant enough fellow
to know for a short time. The whole
question is what will happen when
the red undergrowth sprouts in
the winter? Are you really a
promising pupil? I believe I'm
very bad at it. Perhaps Leonard
would like to give me a few lessons.
But of course I am people must
need to be so skilful. at least
that's my theory. The stress of
unosphere is making me daft.
I must go & have luncheon.
I do envy you going to Spain.
I'd give a good deal to be going
there too. Yours V.B.

(56) experience come to the conclusion that you are very happy. probably more so than you have ever been. Am I right? If he'll write to me perhaps I shall be able to give an opinion in his state too.

V. B.

ASHEHAM HOUSE,
RODMELL,
LEWES.

1912

Aug 23

My Billy. You might think I had time to write letters here. but if so you are much mistaken. I lead the busiest of lives. Down at 9 punctually. then dinner & order which means a long talk with Sophy. she tells me what she thinks of you & Leonard - very flattering to him of course - & how she thinks you eat-better when you are helped. & don't have to cut your own helpings. "like the Masters. Miss Nessa - Miss Seemia don't like to be bothered with those things" so tells Leonard to do the carving. Then I give Julian his reading lesson! & wonder how any one ever learns that BAT spells bat with so many appalling difficulties in the way. Then I have to talk a little to Quentin. & then perhaps I paint. when certain maiden aloes if it. but I haven't really embarked on much painting yet. Judith has luncheon with me. which means that it takes about 1½ hours. & I can't settle down to write letters after much. & then you see comes tea & the children again. & then I read my Times of yesterday & after dinner all the really important letters have to be written - & then in odd moments that's how my day! He is the most loveable & attractive creature. large & beautiful. & the exact image of Sheets a size larger. & he chases the sheep whenever we aren't looking. We have named him Rob. I see

he will be a great addition to our lives. Don't trust to local information about typhoid at Avignon. It is to the interest of the natives to make out that there is none. & they always do. I remember at Bologna even the doctor would hardly admit that malaria was ever known at Ravenna. & when there was cholera last year in Italy no Italian would sleep at. Don't run even a slight risk. Its not worth it. I do envy you abroad. I now get quite homesick for foreign parts. Even if they're not really better than England they're really so free & irresponsible in one's life in town. I wish I was going to meet you in Spain. Yesterday was our first fine day here. Today is a hopeless grey drizzle & all the view is obliterated beyond the first field. However I am thankful we are not in small lodgings or at Seend. At least the children have a splendid day in any case. Clive is getting very much tired in Scotland. where it is also horrid weather. How do you like what Roger & I would say of the scenery? Probably our remarks would be quite unexpected & original. I wonder why Lemon has come to such a flattering opinion about me. I must tell you of my unexpected success. I have actually sold a picture to the Contemporary Art Society!! Ross & Aitken came to London Sq. just before I left to see which of Duncan's works they would get. They liked the Queen of Hearts best. but that belongs to Roger & I don't know if he'll let them have it. Then Ross saw a painting of a Spanish model by me & said he would buy it. I only asked £5. 5.0 so it is not a great financial coup. but I hope may lead me to other commercial success. But I don't really think nothing I can do will ever make money. Still I might make enough to pay for Abraham. I hope Quilt approves of all the new curtains etc. I have had great difficulties over the green room rug. & have at last plunged into red & mauve. Tell L. that from certain recent signs I, in the very eye of

1912

ASHEHAM HOUSE,
RODMELL,
LEWES. Sep. 2.

My Billy. I woke to a day of rain & wind this morning, after a stormy day of wind & rain yesterday. As I was dressing Clive came into my room - "Well, I told you what would happen. The pump is broken & there's no water." Oh Lord. I thought. Water, water everywhere - I went in to order dinner & find Mrs Funnell in her most-talkative mood. "I'm very sorry, ma'am, & I'd do my best for you. But I can't go on emptying them pails every morning. In this wet weather. etc etc" for 10 minutes or so - "And then the pump. Funnell won't have any more to do with it - He declares he won't. & them poor children - they've been doing it for a week & they can't do it any more. It's broke all to pieces & we must have a new one - & while you're about it what I say is why don't you put in new W.C.'s at the same time - It's unnecessary work, that's what it is, doing all that carrying & hurrying & I'm very sorry but I can't go on with it." Sophy was hovering about all the time seeing that I acted my part fittingly enough I suppose. She thinks me very weak - even weaker than Leonard does - I went in & broke the news to the company - "Well we'd better take the children back to Lewes at once" said Clive with gloomy despair. "We can't

live without water & it will take at least a fortnight to get a new pump put in. Also I don't know if you want to prescribe the house with an expensive pump.
Etchells & Rose have offered to go & inspect the pump. & Rose who was back in Guildford today says how he would send out workmen immediately & take all necessary steps. So we wait. In 10 minutes they had mended the pump so that it will at any rate for a time work better than it has ever done. This so encouraged Chloe's spirits that he interviewed them & arranged that a farm labourer is to come every morning to do both pumping & EC carrying. The sun has come out & I feel that we have distinctly scored over the Funnells who have really been very tiresome since we've been here. They make an awful fuss & are very slow. Today have won through their grumblings & dilatoriness sacrificed 5/- a week. Mrs F. wouldn't do the EC's evenings & F. made the boys do all the pumping - so I am rather glad to have a labourer instead. You see life here has its trials. I fear that Chloe & rather against the place at present. He still thinks it dank & the Etchells pair unbelievably heavy-on-their-hands. They are nice but remarkably slow & he is apt to be high minded. However I like them on the whole. Who do you think is coming to stay on Thursday? Violet! She has rescued me with letters lately & now

ASHEHAM HOUSE,
RODMELL,
LEWES.

wants to come & stay 2 nights. It will be very odd having her again but I should think she'd do all right here. Duncan is also probably coming this week. & in fact as far as I can see we shall have a constant stream. Roger comes again next Thursday. & Saxon. & then Keynes. Sydney Waterlow, Molly. Oliver Strachey. Norton & perhaps others. I have them all entirely alone & it is quite easy. We play Badminton occasionally but that is all we do in the way of entertainment. I hope Sophy hasn't been worked too hard with all those people. I think she'd like to get one & my house to nights but I shall never live up to her standards. In fact we have a little suffered from the excessive good order in which she & Maud have kept us. I don't know how they've learnt it in your establishment but they certainly have a much higher standard of cleanliness & tidiness than mine have.

Tell Leonard that I very much enjoyed his letter & account of his night with the Apes for which I pity him sincerely. I can well

believe it all I would certainly never stand it
myself. He might be my a whip. I must
consider carefully the question & whether he's
happy before I answer it. But I think there can
be only one answer. How I envy you in
Spain. I must go there soon I see - Roger
says of course that you ought to have had
meals in restaurants & not in the hotel at
Barcelona & that if you had you would have
found the food delicious. Oh dear, it's
raining again. We certainly have had vile
weather here - It is the worst August on record.
The garden is deliciously nice & the tar Pump is the
Sum & Killing mosquitoes as you are - but
that were entirely without mosquitoes have
& they don't add to our happiness. It is bad
luck having this weather for I'm afraid
it won't help Clive to like the place.
I'm writing in pencil as I'm out of
reach of ink. Write me good long letters
& don't use them as blotting pads

Yours D.

(59) time for mitty letters. However I'll try & do letters.
& please send even cards occasionally or I shall
nip out & surprise you somewhere in Italy for
which I'm getty very
homesick. Love V.

ASHEHAM HOUSE,
RODMELL,
LEWES.

Sep. 44

(1912)

My Billy. I was just going to send off a frantic
appeal to Lemard for news. as I was becoming
convinced that you were having a miscarriage
or something. & now your letter has come &
see that I was not altogether wrong. I hope
the heat is not really doing you harm. but dont
go to too hot places. Heat is bad for nerves
you know. & surely Ravenna at this time
of year is bound to give Lemard malaria.
Its really very bad for it. I hope he's all
right again. The second part of his treatment
sounds to me very sensible. Be sure you
let me know if either of you do fall ill.
I have always done the same by you.
We are in a turmoil here. Adrian suddenly
appeared. having found Germany too much
for him. He & Duncan & Sydney are now
here & Molly comes today. D. sleeps in
the [redacted] & where A. is to sleep still
has yet to be decided. The fact is this
place is now a great success. Clive is
very happy here & so are the others. so
much so that they dont want to leave
& everyone wants to come - The weather

has been much better lately. Badminton is in full swing which gives them violent exercise & the place is divine. It contains what there never was such a house or such country for painters. Clive now says we must arrange to keep it on another year. if we can arrange with you about the summer months. which I hope we shall be able to do. Norton is coming next week so I rather fear we shall not have their house. but (I'm afraid they have taken it. Ka crashed the other day & thought it was now definitely taken. It rather an awful prospect for us. I have them so near. I rather enquire about the K. B. W. rooms soon. but I suppose it's no use just yet. We had Keynes here last week. I liked him very much better than I had before. He was more cheerful & as Duncan was here too I think he enjoyed himself.

The children are extraordinarily well & happy. Julian looks brown & ruddy instead of the white creature he came from town as evidently the place agrees with them. Quentin is very attractive & becoming master of the house. He is most determined & persistent. Give my love to Lemand & say I like my letters long. but if you knew the difficulty of writing here. I am always in public & the days fly. I've scarcely time to write a sentence. & in the evenings. my usual

T. PARSONS 3:2.73